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Articles in Today's Clips

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| TOPIC | PAGE |
|-------------------|-------|
| Juvenile Justice | 2-3 |
| Domestic Violence | 4-7 |
| Health Care | 8-9 |
| *State Budget | 10-11 |
| News Advisory | 12 |



Police: Teens busted in Commerce with heroin

By SHAUN BYRON
Of The Oakland Press

COMMERCE TWP. - Three Walled Lake Central High School students are facing narcotics charges after Oakland County Sheriff's deputies said they arrested them with heroin and \$300 in cash.

"It's pretty serious stuff," Oakland County Undersheriff Michael McCabe said of the drugs. "(People) may be shocked by the age, but our narcotics enforcement team makes busts of heroin all the time. Heroin use is on the rise."

The deputies had been dispatched about 10 p.m. Wednesday to West Ridge Drive, off Oakley Park Road and a short distance from Walled Lake Central, for a suspicious vehicle.

Deputies said that is where they found two 16-year-old boys and a 16-year-old girl with 40 bundles of heroin and the money. McCabe said a bundle is only a small amount and usually sells for \$5. "Most heroin users use three or four of those a day," he said. Three teens are being charged as juveniles and remain in custody, McCabe said. The two boys are being charged with possession of 25 grams or less of heroin.

The girl is being charged with intent to deliver 50 grams or more of heroin. Deputies said they discovered she had it hidden in her pants.

Sheriff's officials have reported a 50 percent increase in cases involving heroin.

One factor in the increase is the painkiller fentanyl. The Drug Enforcement Agency reports there were 37 fentanyl-related deaths from July 2005 through the end of June 2006 in Oakland County. Of those deaths, 43 percent were linked to a combination of heroin and fentanyl, 39 percent were a fentanyl and cocaine mix and the rest were a combination of the two.

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THE ANN ARBOR NEWS

Boy pleads no contest in bus case

Friday, April 18, 2008

BY TOM TOLEN

The Livingston Community News

A 10-year old Howell-area boy pleaded no contest to reduced charges of sexual assault involving a 7-year-old boy on a school bus last year.

The boy will be sentenced May 23 in Livingston County Juvenile Court. He pleaded no contest Monday to charges of second-degree criminal sexual conduct and gross indecency between males in exchange for a charge of first-degree criminal sexual conduct being dismissed.

Authorities have said he and an 11-year-old boy sexually assaulted the 7-year-old on a school bus last May.

The 11-year-old was earlier placed on two years of probation and ordered to undergo random drug and alcohol testing and counseling. He pleaded no contest to gross indecency between males, and charges of first- and second-degree criminal sexual conduct were dropped.

A no contest plea is not an admission of guilt, but is treated as such for sentencing purposes.

Livingston County Prosecutor David Morse said the plea agreement with the 10-year-old was stricter "because (the other boy) was more forthcoming about his role."

"The big concern by my staff was this kid needed treatment and now has the opportunity to get the counseling he needs," Morse said. "If he is not successful in counseling, he's back to square one."

If the 10-year-old successfully completes the treatment program, the conviction will be stricken from his record. He was represented by Howell attorney James Balmforth, who did not return calls for comment.

The case was originally set to go to trial this week.

Tom Tolen can be reached at ttolen@livingstoncommunitynews.com or at 810-844-2009.

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Man faces multiple charges after assault

FROM STAFF REPORTS

TRAVERSE CITY -- A Grawn man faces multiple charges after he allegedly assaulted his girlfriend and tried to keep her from calling for help.

Wesley James Harrand, 29, was charged with one count of interfering with electronic communications, a two-year felony, and misdemeanor domestic assault in the April 11 incident, court records show.

Grand Traverse County sheriff's deputies responded after Harrand allegedly assaulted the woman, who then tried to dial 911 from telephones in the kitchen and a bedroom, records show. He allegedly took both phones from her and then choked her against a wall until she collapsed. She later made it across the street to call for help, records show.

Harrand was released from the Grand Traverse County Jail on bond. A preliminary exam is scheduled for April 29.

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In Her Shoes walkers at Saginaw Valley State University elevate awareness

by The Saginaw News

Friday April 18, 2008, 9:16 AM

Saginaw Valley State University hosted for "Walk a Mile in Her Shoes," the international men's march to stop rape, sexual assault and gender violence.

Organizers for the Thursday fundraiser, one of 82 planned this year from Anchorage, Alaska, to San Diego, so far have collected more than \$5,000. The money will benefit Saginaw's Underground Railroad and Sexual Assault Center of Child & Family Service, Shelter House in Midland and the Bay Area Women's Center in Bay City.

More than 300 people took part, walking around campus, listening to speakers and watching a dramatic performance.



Local News

Men totter in high heels to support sexual assault awareness

[Print Page](#)

By Julie Ann Williamson

Published: Friday, April 18, 2008 1:09 PM EDT

The 4-inch stilettos weren't Manolo Blahniks or Jimmy Choos, but the men and women participating in Saginaw Valley State University's second annual "Walk a Mile in Her Shoes" event didn't mind.

It was the message that mattered at Ryder Center O'Neill Arena on Thursday evening -- where more than 300 people gathered to wear women's high-heeled pumps and take a 1-mile promenade around campus in an effort to raise awareness of rape, sexual violence and abuse.

The "Walk a Mile in Her Shoes" was part of a national initiative and just one of the events at SVSU organized as part of April's Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

According to Jen Ordway, assistant director for student counseling and health services, SVSU held its first "Walk a Mile in Her Shoes" in November 2006 and raised more than \$6,500 for charity. Organizers hope to more than double that figure this year, she said.

SVSU spokesman J.J. Boehm said more than \$5,000 in pledges already has been collected. The total number of pledges is unknown at this time, because participants could pledge through a number of groups.

Participants donned red T-shirts with "Walk a Mile in Her Shoes" emblazoned across the chest, and many carried signs displaying the same message. Funkified Shoes ensured plenty of high heels were on hand in sizes up to 17 and in a variety of colors including red, hot pink, silver and light blue.

Some risked blisters by putting their bare feet into the pumps. Others wore athletic or dress socks and a few individuals chose tights or knee-high nylons. Many of the male participants took tiny, careful steps, unsure of their footing.

SVSU senior Brendan Reed, a member of the cheerleading squad, was participating in the walk for a second year. The biology major was eager to support the cause -- and to see if he could survive the mile walk in hot pink heels.

Despite breaking his ankle in December, Reed's friend Matt McSweyn donned shiny red pumps.

"This event is for a good cause. My mom went through domestic violence with a boyfriend and it doesn't sit well with me," McSweyn said.

SVSU President Eric Gilbertson, who wore a "Walk a Mile" T-shirt over his blue dress shirt, also participated with hot pink pumps complementing his gray dress socks and slacks.

"There is no humiliation I would not endure to raise money for a good cause. How could I say no to support such a creative cause?" he said.

Before the walkers departed, Tony Thomson, SVSU director of counseling and health services, briefly took the stage to introduce speaker Sara Ylen, a sexual abuse advocate who not only suffered domestic abuse as a child, but who was the victim of a violent rape that nearly took her life six years ago.

Thomson, a veteran walker, explained that because of low-back problems he would wear chunk heels this year. However, as he stepped from around the podium, audience members could see that Thomson was wearing the



Greg Behe, right, associate director of residential life at Saginaw Valley State University, grimaces while traipsing through campus wearing bright pink high heel shoes with his daughter Hannah Behe, 5, (not shown) and a crowd of local supporters for the Walk a Mile in Her Shoes, the international men's march to stop rape, sexual assault, and gender violence Thursday evening at the Ryder Center O'Neill Arena. (Daily News/MANDY MCCONAHAN)

smart-looking slingbacks from 2006. He explained that he could not resist bringing the shoes out for a brief reappearance.

"Guys, you'll really notice how the heels accentuate your calves," he said, lifting one foot to model the shoes. The crowd laughed and clapped in response.

However, Thomson soon became serious and shared some frightening statistics.

"College-age women are four times more likely to be sexually assaulted," he said.

Ylen then took the stage to tell her story and deliver a message of inspiration and hope.

Raped in broad daylight and left to die in a parking lot in 2001, Ylen said the violent crime she suffered destroyed her belief in humanity. However, she took action after her attack, pursuing justice and working to effect changes for other survivors. In 2003, Ylen's attacker was sentenced to prison.

"It is high time men got involved in this issue. These are your wives, mothers, sisters and girlfriends we are fighting for.

"I don't tell my story for pity," she explained. "I want to put a face to the cause you are supporting today.

"Wearing women's shoes you get to be the hero to the sister or friend in need of support, the husband to the wife who needs love. You are taking a stand tonight that many men do not have the courage to take. Today you are standing up and fighting back. I am awestruck," Ylen said.

For victims of sexual assault, realizing they are not alone might be a step toward recovery, Ylen said.

"Victims of sexual abuse and assault must remember they are worth fighting for ... that it is their right to reclaim what has been taken, and it is OK to ask for help. I drew a lot of strength from others after my attack," she said.

Drago Dumbovic, head coach for the SVSU women's soccer team, was the first walker to finish the approximately 1-mile course.

"I am happy to be a part of this event and to represent men and Saginaw Valley. Hopefully this event will raise awareness of sexual assault and help prevent domestic violence from occurring in the future," he said.

Advanced Therapeutic had chairs set up and therapists on hand, ready to give weary walkers back and foot massages as they returned to the Ryder Center. Hot dogs, potato chips and dip, and bottled water also were provided.

Proceeds from the event will benefit the Bay Area Women's Shelter, Shelterhouse of Midland, the Saginaw Sexual Assault Center and the Underground Railroad of Saginaw. The nonprofit organizations had booths set up in the Ryder Center and representatives were on hand to answer questions and hand out informational brochures.

Suzanne Edmonds, an international student from Australia studying social work at SVSU, has volunteered at the Underground Railroad for four years.

"An event like this is important because it highlights that sexual assault is out there and puts a face to the issue. But it is important to remember that not every man is abusive or a perpetrator," she said.

For background on the national initiative, visit www.walkamileinhershoes.org.

April 17, 2008

MEDICAID COVERAGE FOR YOUNG ADULTS DEBATED

A long-running disagreement over whether 19- and 20-year-olds should be covered by Medicaid spilled into a discussion on the 2008-09 budget for the Department of Community Health on Thursday.

As the House Appropriations Community Health Subcommittee begins its review of the Senate budget ([SB 1094](#)) that removes Medicaid coverage for those young adults, lawmakers were told doing so would cost the state federal dollars for the program.

Approximately 15,000 19 and 20-year-olds are covered under Medicaid, 10 percent of which are young people who are aging out of the foster care system, said Jack Kresnak, president and CEO of Michigan's Children.

Terri Winegarten, staff attorney for the Center for Civil Justice, added that the reason why many of these young adults are seeking Medicaid coverage is because they have some sort of health condition already. If they aren't covered, then their health problem will only be exacerbated down the road.

Doug Patterson, director of state policy for the Michigan Primary Care Association, said the 19 and 20-year-old population is relatively inexpensive to cover in comparison to other populations under Medicaid.

But Andy Johnston with the Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce told subcommittee members the Medicaid system does need to undergo more reform as the ballooning cost of the program still fails to cover the price of providing the care. Paying for the uncompensated care is then shifted to employer-provided health care premiums, he said.

The state is offering "rich benefits" that exceed the federal standards, he said. The federal government does not require Medicaid coverage for 19 and 20-year-olds.

Mr. Johnston argued that if the state provided benefits more in line with federal regulations then it could pay providers more for their care and ease that cost shift from occurring.

David Seaman, executive vice president of the Michigan Health and Hospital Association, said it was disappointing 19 and 20-year-old coverage was cut, but much of his testimony focused on how provider taxes are helping to leverage federal dollars as opposed to the state's general fund.

Subcommittee chair [Rep. Gary McDowell](#) (D-Rudyard) said it was hard to maintain coverage for young adults, but it was the hospitals that "put money on the table for that."

Mr. Seaman said under the governor's budget, hospitals would pay \$41.5 million to generate \$36 million in the dish pool and 99 of 140 hospitals would be put at a disadvantage because benefits would be focused on more rural hospitals.

[Rep. Mike Nofs](#) (R-Battle Creek) asked what kind of distribution standard the hospitals would like to see if the current one was eliminated. Mr. Seaman said they want to work with the department in calculating a formula incorporating the quality assessment assurance program (QAAP) areas.

Rick Murdock, executive director for the Michigan Association of Health Plans, told the subcommittee the discussion on what to do with QAAP in the future should coincide with talks on the individual health care market bills (referred to as the Blues bills) and the governor's Michigan First health care proposal.

Several groups also expressed concern over the Senate cutting money for the Healthy Michigan Fund. Mr. Kresnak said for every \$1 the state spends on the fund it saves \$4 in emergency care and welfare cases.

But Jon Reardon, board chairman for the Michigan Health Care Association of Michigan, testified in support of the Senate budget, arguing the governor's budget cuts \$31 million, shifts \$32 million to new and expanding programs, increases the provider tax "as we are finding providers will be paying on average 50 percent more under the Michigan Business Tax."

April 17, 2008

LEGISLATURE FINISHES WORK ON 2007-08 SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGETS

Supplemental budgets for the 2007-08 fiscal year, which include nearly \$36 million for a settlement with the federal government on Medicaid school-based services, were sent to [Governor Jennifer Granholm](#) for her signature on Thursday.

The bills, [HB 5344](#), which covers all non-school related expenditures, and [HB 5531](#), which covers school-related expenditures, both won final approval by the House and Senate on Thursday after conference committees approved the compromise versions at a morning meeting.

Both passed easily, though there was some controversy about HB 5344 in the House. That conference report passed in the House on a 79-29 vote and by 37-1 in the Senate. HB 5531 passed on a 106-0 vote in the House and by 37-1 in the Senate.

HB 5344 totals \$143.9 million, with \$42.3 million in general fund spending. The largest share of the budget is allocated to the Department of Community Health and includes the \$35.9 million general fund settlement with the federal government over school services that use Medicaid funding. The budget also includes \$60.8 million in federal monies to cover additional hospital payments and \$40.4 million in increased health maintenance organization physician payments.

Another \$11 million in general funds goes to the Department of Environmental Quality to make up revenue that officials had originally anticipated would come from fee increases. Those fees have not yet been agreed to, however.

There is also \$1 million allocated for a new trooper school in the Department of State Police along with \$2 million in general funds to cover additional funding for several forensic laboratories.

The Department of Human Services is getting \$4 million in general funds to increase day care services along with \$2 million in general funds to cover a rate increase in the foster care and childcare fund. In addition, the department will receive \$9.7 million in federal funds for a nutrition education program at Michigan State University.

The budget also includes \$10 million to cover the cost of the state's now-controversial January 15 presidential primary.

And it reduces by \$30 million in general funds debt service payments the state makes.

HB 5531 sees a cut of \$108.2 million in School Aid Funds from the 2007-08 school aid budget, reflecting a smaller overall pupil population.

However, the budget also adds \$1.275 million for very small, rural districts.

Cut from the final budget was \$300,000 for competitive grants for the FIRST Robotics competitions, which caused [Sen. Nancy Cassis](#) (R-Novi) to oppose the bill, as she said robotics is a key to the state's economic future and the FIRST Robotics competition helps spark students interest in that field.

Michigan Department of Human Services Advisory

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Children's Trust Fund Board meets with national prevention expert

April 18, 2008

In observance of April as Child Abuse Prevention Month in Michigan, the Michigan Children's Trust Fund board and staff will meet with James M. Hmurovich, president of Prevent Child Abuse America, on Monday, April 21 at 2:30 p.m. at DTE Energy, 101 S. Washington Square, Suite 700, in Lansing. The meeting is open to the public.

Hmurovich, a former juvenile probation officer for Monroe County, Ind. and former Indiana state parole officer, will address Prevent Child Abuse America's definition of "prevention," outline his organization's national activities, and review issues concerning PCA's Michigan Chapter, co-chaired by CTF's Rich Bearup and Bill Newhouse from Children's Charter for the Courts.

CTF is a statewide non-profit organization dedicated to the prevention of child abuse and neglect. The fund works in partnership with its 72 local councils serving 82 Michigan counties. Local councils are independent, community-based organizations that identify needs and facilitate collaborative prevention programs for children and families in their communities. The CTF board is housed within the Department of Human Services. Since 1982, the fund has raised over \$60 million and has provided support to over six million children and families.

For more information go to www.michigan.gov/ctf or <http://www.preventchildabuse.org>